

Board of Education
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

September 9, 2003

MEMORANDUM

To: Cluster Coordinators
Parent-Teacher Association Presidents

From: Patricia B. O'Neill, President

Subject: FY 2005 Capital Budget and FY 2005–2010 Capital Improvements Program

As you know, it is time to begin the budget process for the FY 2005 Capital Budget and the FY 2005–2010 Capital Improvements Program (CIP). This year, as in all odd numbered fiscal years, is a full budget cycle, and it is our opportunity to include many of the projects necessary to meet the needs of our schools including new capacity projects, modernization, and elementary school gymnasiums. Because the economic climate of our county, state, and country is still somewhat fragile, funding the capital improvements program will be an arduous task. However, this task can be accomplished, and it is vital that all cluster coordinators and parent-teacher association (PTA) representatives participate in this budget process to achieve our ultimate goal.

The FY 2005–2010 CIP budget process will begin with the review of the Spending Affordability Guidelines (SAG), an important first step in the budget process. The SAG set by the County Council will determine the amount of general obligation bonds that can be sold, which ultimately determines the size of the capital budget for the entire county. The Management and Fiscal Policy Committee of the County Council is scheduled to meet to discuss this issue, as well as the proposed impact tax for schools and the designation of the recordation tax revenues. The Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee of the County Council also will meet to discuss the proposed changes to the Annual Growth Policy (AGP). The change to the AGP, recommended by the Planning Board, would create an impact tax for new development in the county, designated solely for school construction.

For your review, I have attached talking points that summarize the funding streams necessary to meet our capital needs in our six-year CIP. It is imperative that you meet with Councilmembers and State Delegates to discuss these essential funding issues. The objective for the funding streams is to increase the SAG, preferably to a minimum of \$175 million per year, over the six-year period; dedicate the revenue from the recordation tax to school construction; approve the Planning Board's recommendation to change the AGP and include an impact tax solely for school construction; and aggressively seek a minimum of \$150 million from the state over the next six-year period. The talking points provide further detail on each of the aforementioned subjects in order for each of you to discuss these important issues with our county and state legislators.

I believe that it is important to have both cluster and PTA representation at County Council meetings

in order to show Council members our support for each of the funding streams, as identified in the talking points. The dates, times, and topics for the SAG and AGP meetings are as follows:

Spending Affordability Guidelines (SAG)

Monday, September 8	2:00 p.m.	MFP develops draft guidelines for a public hearing
Tuesday, September 16	TBD	Council sets draft guidelines for the public hearing
Tuesday, September 23	1:30 p.m.	Council holds the public hearing on SAG limits
Thursday, September 25	2:00 p.m.	MFP develops SAG recommendation
Tuesday, October 7	TBD	Council action on SAG limits

Annual Growth Policy (AGP)

Saturday, September 13	9:30 a.m.	Council "Teach-In" on the AGP
Tuesday, September 16	7:00 p.m.	Council hearing on AGP
Thursday, September 18	7:00 p.m.	Council hearing on AGP (continued)
Monday, September 22	9:30 a.m.	First PHED Committee worksession on AGP
Monday, September 29	9:00 a.m.	Second PHED Committee worksession on AGP
Late October (tentative)	TBD	Council approval

County Council agendas and meeting materials are available on the County Council's Web site
www.montgomerycountymd.gov

I am hopeful that all of our cluster coordinators and PTA representatives will meet with our County Council members and State Delegates and use the information provided in the attachments to rally support for our six-year CIP. It is vital that every effort be made to illustrate the capital needs of our schools and influence our legislatures to support funding for school construction.

Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Joseph Lavorgna, director, Department of Planning and Capital Programming, at 301-279-3333 or me.

PBO:vnb

Attachments

Copy to:

Dr. Weast
Executive Staff
Mr. Lavorgna